country in petroleum sector, foreign investments and development and exploration of new oil fields ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) A strategic Planning group on restructuring of oil industry has been set up with the following terms of reference :

(i) Assess the emerging global Oil and Gas scene; trends in exploration and production, refining capacities, pattern of demand for products and crude oil, movement of international prices, development of alternate fuels and evolvement of new technology and R&D.

(ii) Assess the role of Oil & Natural Gas on long term basis in meeting the commercial energy requirement of the increasingly globalised Indian economy.

(iii) Identify the role of Government and the market forces for restructuring and developing a self-reliant and robust Indian Oil Industry with International cost competitivenes and globle presence.

(iv) Analyse strength and weakness of the Indian Oil Industry and develop strategic action plan for reform keeping in focus environment and ecology, sustanable growth and provide the national economy the "energy security".

(d) The above Group has not yet submitted its Report.

(e) Parallel marketing by private parties has been introduced in respect of Kerosene, LPG and LSHS. Upto September, 94. 27749 MTs of LPG, 292 TMTs of SKO and 202 of LSHS have been imported by the private parties. Naphta has been put under OGL. Import of FO and ATF has also been permitted under SIL. Investment by 9 private parties in refinery sector and some joint ventures in marketing and exploration have been firmed up. The anticipated benefits from the award of exploration blocks and discovered fields are likely to be induction of foreign capital, access to the latest technology and early augmentation to production and additional accretion to hydrocarbon reserves.

Delay in Providing LPG Connections to Consumers

2398. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the waiting list for LPG connections has crossed the 2 million mark;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as per the present indications, an applicant has to wait for 7 years for getting a new connection; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that parallel marketing of LPG connection has yet to take off, if so, what are the reasons for delay in providing LPG connections to consumers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) The waiting list as on 1-10-1994 is about 11.5 millions. In some locations, waiting list is quite old. Efforts are constantly on to release LPG connections to as many applicants and as early as possible by augmenting product availability through higher production from existing sources, commissioning of new production sources and imports.

(c) The private agencies are excepted to commence activities under the said scheme depending on their commercial decision. However, much progress has not been noticed so far, which is basically on account of lack of import facilities with parallel marketeers. Some of them have taken action to develop their own import facilities and other infrastructure.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps/Gas Agencies on out of turn basis

2399. SHRI O. P. KOHLI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Supreme Court was examining the matter of discretionary authority of the Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas to sanction LPG agencies and petrol pumps on out-of-turn/adhoc basis, as was reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated, 17th December, 1993;

(b) if so, has the Court gone into the matter and given any pronouncement on the subject;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for the delay; and

(d) the number of petrol pumps and LPG outlets sanctioned on adhoc/out-of-turn basis by the Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas in each of the last three years, giving the names of the persons to whom sanctioned, at what places and the specific reasons/grounds therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) A Public Interest Litigation challenging the discretionary authority of the Government to allot dealerships/distributorships of petroleum products is presently pending before the